

There is no scenario on God's green Earth where it should be worth risking millions of jobs, trillions in household wealth, people's Social Security checks, veterans' benefits, and another recession, just to score a short-term, meaningless political point. That is what Republicans seem fixated on doing.

Now, there is a very simple step we can take today to guarantee the government won't default and won't shut down. Both sides can come together to vote yes on today's vote and vote to pass the continuing resolution. Just as Democrats worked in a bipartisan fashion under the Trump administration, Republicans must now step up to the plate. To do otherwise is the height of recklessness and irresponsibility.

Republicans say they don't want to see a government shutdown. They say they don't want to see our government default on our debt. Then, they should vote yes. It is plain and simple. It is very clear. There is no obfuscation here—crystal clear. Voting yes means avoiding default and avoiding a government shutdown. Voting no says: Let's risk it. Let's risk it.

By choosing to block today's resolution, Republicans are intentionally making default more likely. By blocking an extension of the debt limit, Republicans will solidify themselves for a long time as the party of default.

I cannot emphasize that this isn't just another political game. We are facing a parade of horrors that will hurt every single American in this country. And it is important to remember that today's vote will also advance a number of priorities besides just funding the government and avoiding default, as important as those are. It would provide desperately needed emergency funding for millions of people affected by natural disasters from this summer, including hurricanes, wildfires, and flooding across Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia. It will provide billions to help resettle Afghan refugees who risked their lives helping our troops abroad. Both sides claim they support these priorities. So the easy answer is to vote yes later today.

Being elected to office means sometimes you have to do things to rise above partisan politics. It means we have an obligation to work together when our country faces an acute crisis. Tearing the barn down is easy. Building it up, preserving it, and keeping it standing year after year takes hard work and cooperation. And, at the end of the day, the only thing that matters in this Chamber is how its Members vote.

Rest assured, Democrats will vote today to do the right thing. The American people will be watching whether or not our Republican colleagues choose to vote in favor of preserving our full faith and credit or vote in favor of an unprecedented default.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

EXTENDING GOVERNMENT FUNDING AND DELIVERING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 5305, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 137, H.R. 5305, a bill making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

VACCINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I am glad to share that, a few minutes ago, I received a booster vaccination for COVID-19. All throughout the pandemic, I have followed the best advice from experts and especially from my own healthcare providers. It was an easy decision to receive a booster.

I am a survivor of childhood polio from before vaccines—before vaccines eradicated that disease here in our country and around the world now. So I have been a lifelong champion of vaccinations.

Mountains of evidence tell us these shots are safe, effective, and dramatically shrink the odds of severe disease or death from COVID. Like I have been saying for months, these safe and effective vaccines are the way to defend ourselves and our families from this terrible virus. They are also how we stay on offense against COVID as a country. All Americans should speak with their doctors and get vaccinated.

ECONOMY

Madam President, now, on a completely different matter, it is not unusual for a President to have a rough spell. Every administration faces a stretch of time where nothing seems to go their way. But what we are witnessing today is entirely different.

President Biden has not been dealt a bad hand by forces outside his control. This White House is not sailing through some unavoidable patch of choppy water. No, the Democrats have steered our country straight into a storm of serious crises all of their own making.

On issue after issue, Americans are hurting because of specific policy

choices that Democrats have made over the objections of people who actually knew better. Democrats did not inherit most of the painful inflation that is hammering working families. Their decisions have fueled it. Even liberal economists warned the President that runaway liberal spending could send costs soaring—soaring—for the middle class. Now working Americans are paying dearly at the grocery store, at the gas station, and practically everywhere that matters to families.

And what are Democrats doing today? Putting together yet another reckless taxing-and-spending spree behind closed doors that would make inflation even worse.

Now, President Biden did not inherit humiliation in Afghanistan either; he deliberately chose that as well. The Biden administration's own experts warned the White House that a reckless withdrawal would embolden terrorists and harm our ability to gather intelligence that keeps us safe. But the President clung to his made-up deadline, handed huge momentum to the Taliban and their terrorist friends, and broke his explicit promise to leave no American behind who wanted out. As one former Democratic Member of Congress said last week, "The way the administration executed that withdrawal last week has been an utter and abject disaster."

Democrats did not inherit this border crisis either. This security nightmare and human tragedy is yet another direct result of their own policies. President Biden and his allies spent 2 years campaigning on the concept of Big Government giveaways to people here illegally. Then they took office and began dismantling enforcement on the border. So what do they expect? Wave after wave of vulnerable people have been lured into hellish conditions by the mirage the Democrats have set up—cruelty masquerading as compassion. Untold thousands of people have simply been released into our country with what amounts to a polite invitation to show up—show up—for a hearing. Even before the Biden surge, only about half of individuals actually showed up.

One self-created crisis after another from our unified Democratic Party government. The latest additions are their confusion about how to fund the government and raise the debt ceiling. For more than 2 months now, Senate Republicans have been completely clear about how this process will play out, so let me make it abundantly clear one more time.

We will support a clean continuing resolution that will prevent a government shutdown, get disaster relief to Louisiana, help properly vetted Afghan refugees who put themselves on the line for America, and support the Iron Dome assistance for our ally Israel. We will not provide Republican votes for raising the debt limit.